

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 70-73 and 75-80 are presented for consideration. Claims 70 and 72 are independent. Claims 65-69 and 74 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 70 and 72 have been amended to clarify features of the subject invention, while claims 78-80 have been added to recite additional features of the subject invention. Support for these changes and these claims can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 72 and 74 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter, and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. To expedite allowance of this application, the subject matter of claim 74 has been substantively incorporated in independent claim 70, whereas claim 72 has been rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of prior independent claim 70. Applicants submit, therefore, that independent claims 70 and 72, as well as claims 71, 73 and 75-80, variously depending therefrom, should be deemed allowable.

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claims 65 and 67-69 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,349,604 to Nakata. Claim 66 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the Nakata patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,028,697 to Yamada et al. Claims 70, 73 and 75-77 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over

U.S. Patent No. 5,668,672 to Oomura in view of the Nakata patent. Claim 71 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the Oomura patent in view of the Nakata patent as applied to claim 70 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,358,198 to Moriyama et al. Applicants submit that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach many features of the present invention, as previously recited in claims 65-77. Therefore, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Nevertheless, as discussed above, to expedite allowance of this application, the subject matter of allowable claim 74 has been substantively incorporated in independent claim 70, whereas claim 72 has been rewritten in independent form. Further, claims 65-69 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, only those claims which the Examiner had indicated as containing allowable subject matter are pending in this application. Specifically, allowable independent claim 70, and claims 71, 73 and 75-78, depending therefrom, and allowable independent claim 72, with claims 79 and 80 depending therefrom, are presented. Accordingly, all pending claims should be deemed allowable.

Applicants submit that this Amendment After Final Rejection clearly places this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants believed that the prior Amendment placed the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the instant Amendment, as an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is requested under 37 CFR 1.116.

Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are also requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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